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National Foreign Assessment Center

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USSR
Weekly Review

8 December 1977

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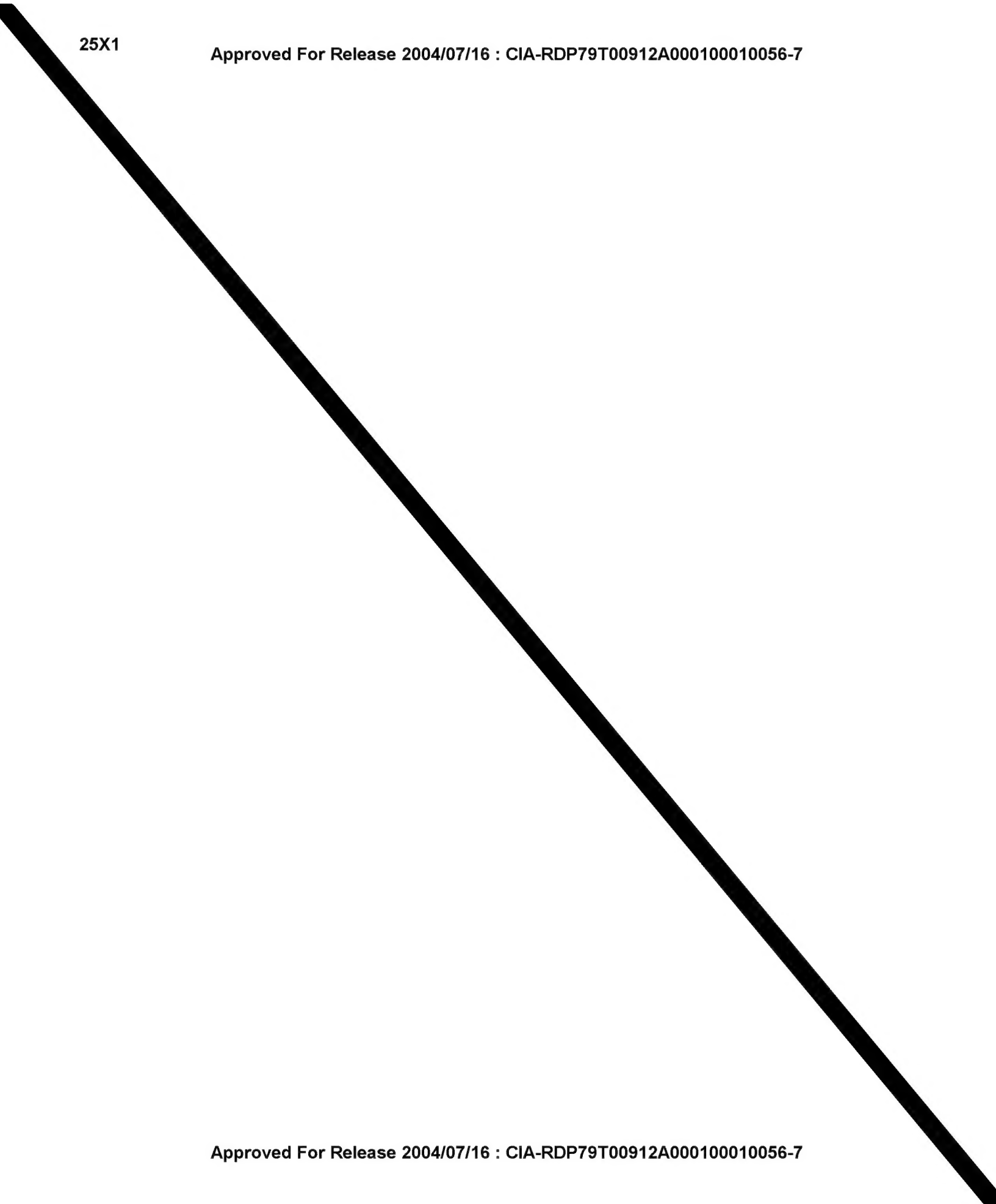

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Still Another Energy-Related Ministry?

The Soviet Union is planning to establish a Ministry of Offshore Petroleum and Gas Production, according to rumors circulating in Moscow. The new ministry would probably be composed of parts of the Ministry of the Petroleum Industry, the Ministry of the Gas Industry, and possibly the Ministry of the Shipbuilding Industry. It would bring the number of energy-related ministries in the Soviet Government to 12 and add to an already uncoordinated bureaucracy.

Despite calls at the 25th Party Congress last year for more coordinated management of the Soviet fuel and energy supply, no fundamental administration reforms were announced. Since then, the only significant measure has been a decree in August making the USSR Committee for People's Control (an agency under the Council of Ministers that investigates bureaucratic improprieties) responsible for monitoring fuel consumption in various industries.

The new ministry, according to a rumor, will be headed by Viktor Ilyich Mishchevich, who is currently First Deputy Minister of the Petroleum Industry responsible for oil drilling and technology.

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